

REMARKS

Claims 10-15 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-9 were previously canceled. New claim 16 is added via this Amendment.

A Request to Suspend Action under 37 C.F.R. § 1.103(c) was filed on February 2, 2003. Termination of the Suspension is hereby requested.

35 U.S.C. § 102:

In the Office Action dated October 1, 2003, claims 10, 11 and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Madden et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,516,239 [hereinafter "Madden"])).

Although this rejection has not been newly made after the filing of the RCE on February 2, 2004, Applicants provide traversal arguments and respond by pointing out why Madden fails to disclose each feature recited in the claims.

The present invention provides a novel and unobvious method of manufacturing products, which is neither taught nor suggested by Madden. In particular, when products having different specifications, manufactured from intermediate products, are supplied to a common feed line, in the present invention, each of the products has address information in the intermediate products. By checking the address information, the products having address information in a predetermined sequential relationship with each other are selected and supplied to the common feed line. The claims have been amended to further define these aspects.

In the common feed line, the products with the address information are transferred in a predetermined sequence. Thus, based on the information of the intermediate products, the

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT
U.S. Application No.: 10/014,607

products in the common feed line are desirably processed. For example, but not by limitation, the products having a specified portion in the intermediate products can be selected easily in the common feed line.

In contradiction, Madden teaches that when vehicles are transferred to a common lane 114 from storage lanes 110A to 110E, the sequence of the vehicles is individually controlled in each of the storage lanes 110A to 110E. The system does not control the sequence of the vehicles in the common lane 114, in regard to the vehicles in the storage lanes 110A to 110E. That is, the sequence of vehicles supplied from the storage lane 110A to the lane 114 is substantially independent from the sequence of the vehicles supplied from the storage lane 110B to the lane 114.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Madden fails to disclose each feature recited in the amended claims. Thus, the present invention is not anticipated by Madden.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT
U.S. Application No.: 10/014,607

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all additional required fees (except the Issue Fee and/or the Publication Fee) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayment to said Deposit Account.

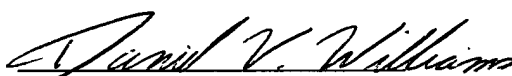
Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER



Daniel V. Williams
Registration No. 45,221

Date: February 27, 2004